

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
Transcriber's Office  
FLOOR DEBATE

February 23, 2005 LB 35, 98

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Yes, thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. I want to let you know right now that what we're going to be talking about here today are actually two bills that came out of Government Committee. One is the committee amendment, and one is the actual bill. LB 98 is a result of the work of the Vote Nebraska Initiative. And it actually allows an election commissioner or county clerk to determine whether to conduct a special election by mail. Now, for those of you who were in the body, or even those of you who weren't in the body, several years ago, Senator Cudaback brought a bill to the Legislature that provided for an election by mail. And we made it very specific and very limited, but it really applies only to issue kinds of elections. But the problem was, as discussed in our committee and the Vote Nebraska Initiative, the subdivision itself got to determine whether a special election would be conducted by mail or not. That was thought to be somewhat problematic for election commissioners and county clerks. So we decided that the better policy would be to let those elected officials consider the cost and the expected vote out...turnout of holding the election by mail. And that...again, we believe that the special elections by mail may increase voter turnout and provide cost savings. And the final vote on the recommendation for the Vote Nebraska Initiative was 15 to 0 in favor of the change. The committee had the hearing. The committee advanced the bill 7 to 1 with only one person being absent. Nobody came in as opposition to the bill. And the Secretary of State's Office and the election commissioners and county clerks association came in also in favor. So with that, Mr. President, I would return the rest of my time to the Chair until it's time to talk about the committee amendments.

SENATOR JANSSEN PRESIDING

SENATOR JANSSEN: Thank you, Senator Schimek. Senator Cudaback. Okay. All right. Excuse me. Senator Cudaback's light was on. Senator Schimek, to open on the committee amendments.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Yes. Thank you, Mr. President. As I mentioned to you, the committee amendment is LB 35. And the committee did kill the bill after we attached it as an